

Applicant: Herbert Wehler
Application No.: 10/571,880

In The Claims

1. (Previously Presented) A sliding door system for a vehicle, wherein the vehicle has a chassis and a sliding door that is movable between a closed position and an open position on the chassis, and the sliding door system comprises:

an energy guide chain having a first end connected to the sliding door and a second end connected to the chassis; and

a curved region disposed between the ends, and the curved region defines a first radius of curvature when the sliding door is in the closed position and a second radius of curvature when the sliding door is in the open position, and the first radius of curvature is smaller than the second radius of curvature.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Canceled)

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11. (Canceled)

12. (Canceled)

13. (Canceled)

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14. (Previously Presented) The sliding door system for a vehicle of claim 1, wherein:

the first end of the energy guide chain is joined to a central portion of the sliding door.

15. (Currently Amended) The sliding door system for a vehicle according to claim 1, wherein:

the first end of the energy guide chain and the second end of the energy guide

chain are ~~closer together~~ spaced apart a first distance when the sliding

door is in the open position and are spaced apart a second distance when

the sliding door is in the closed position, and the first distance is smaller

than the second distance.

16. (Previously Presented) The sliding door system for a vehicle according to claim 1, wherein:

the ratio of the first radius of curvature in the closed position of the sliding door to the

second radius of curvature in the open position of the sliding door is less than

about 0.9.

17. (Previously Presented) The sliding door system for a vehicle according to claim 1, wherein:

the ratio of the first radius of curvature in the closed position of the sliding door to the

second radius of curvature in the open position of the sliding door is less than

about 0.8.

18. (Previously Presented) The sliding door system according to claim 1, wherein:

the ratio of the first radius of curvature to the second radius of curvature is less than

about 0.5.

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19. (Previously Presented) The sliding door system according to claim 1, wherein the energy guide chain further comprises:

a first section in which the first radius of curvature is formed when the sliding door is in the closed position; and

a second section in which the second radius of curvature is formed when the sliding door is in the open position.

20. (Currently Amended) The sliding door system of claim 1, wherein the energy guide chain further comprises:

a first section in which the first radius of curvature is formed when the sliding door is in the closed position; and

a second section in which the second radius of curvature is formed when the sliding door is in the open position, and

wherein the first section ~~is closer to the sliding door has a length that is shorter than the~~
a length of the second section.

21. (Previously Presented) The sliding door system of claim 19, wherein the energy guide chain first section prevents the energy guide chain first section from curving to a radius of curvature less than the first radius of curvature; and the energy guide chain second section prevents the energy guide chain second section from curving to a radius of curvature less than the second radius of curvature.

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22. (Previously Presented) An energy guide chain for a vehicle, the vehicle having a chassis and a sliding door that can be moved between a closed position and an open position on the chassis, and the energy guide chain comprises:

- a first end connected to the sliding door and a second end connected to the chassis;
- a first section that defines a first radius of curvature when the sliding door is in the open position; and
- a second section that defines a second radius of curvature when the sliding door is in the closed position.